



July 24, 2018

Cara M. Christ, M.D., M.S.  
Arizona Department of Health Services  
150 North 18th Avenue  
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

RE: Fake Pregnancy Centers

Dear Dr. Christ,

NOW is a multi-issue, multi-strategy organization that takes a holistic approach to women's rights. Our priorities are winning economic equality and the ERA; championing abortion rights, reproductive freedom, and other women's health issues; opposing racism; fighting bigotry against the LGBTQIA community; and ending violence against women. The Central Phoenix Inez Casiano chapter serves the Phoenix metropolitan area.

The fake crisis pregnancy centers have been repeatedly documented as jeopardizing women's health. The studies referenced are just two of many.<sup>1</sup> The clinics rely on deception, misleading advertising techniques, evasive answers on the phone, confusing names and locations, intimidation, anti-choice rhetoric, and misinformation. They deliberately lie about breast cancer, gestation age, miscarriages, depression, and risks of abortion versus childbirth. They knowingly target young and low income women.

An Arizona man whose 16-year-old daughter had been raped took her to a CPC, not realizing that it was an anti-choice fake clinic. After being shown "brutal footage" including pictures of dismembered fetuses, the man claimed that, "they just emotionally raped her. . . . They are advocates for the unborn, and to hell with the troubled person. They had an ax to grind, and just terrorized her." (Martin Van Der Werf, *Some Abortion Centers Bogus Counseling is 'One-Sided,' Panel Told*, ARIZ. REPUBLIC, Sept. 21, 1991, at A1) This is not the first or last story we have heard like this. Recently a woman testified that she had to text her sister on her cell phone to come and rescue her because she felt she was trapped in the building and could not escape.

In fact the risk of death from a legal abortion is .00073%. One is 10 times more likely to die from a colonoscopy than from a legal abortion. There is a multitude of proof that the best action to reduce abortion is to have contraception easily and cheaply available.

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<sup>1</sup> Bryant, AG, Levi EE, Abortion misinformation from crisis pregnancy centers in North Carolina, 2012 Dec; 86(6): 752-6. Doi Epub 2012 Jul 6. United States House of Representatives Committee On Government Reform, *False and Misleading Health Information Provided by Federally Funded Pregnancy Resource Centers* (2006), at <http://www.chsourcebook.com/articles/waxman2.pdf>.



Given the facts, it is still a question why certain groups consistently attack women's reproductive freedom and health. It was obvious at a hearing in the 2018 legislature that these are the same groups that don't support prenatal care, pre-school, SNAP, CHIPS, education or any other programs that would in fact be pro-family and pro-life. These actions are clearly aimed at enforcing someone's religious dogma and punishing women for stepping out of someone's line.

These are inappropriate motives or actions for a state agency and we ask that you ensure that the Arizona Department of Health Services does its utmost to protect women's health. We ask that you investigate, regulate, and enforce the same rules on the fake clinics that you do on real health care providers; we ask that you ensure that they are giving accurate and comprehensive information; we insist that they must have informed consent in writing from every customer; we ask that they post notices that they are not licensed and do not provide any licensed care. We look forward to working with you on these provisions to protect women's health and lives.

Sincerely,

Dianne Post, Attorney

Chapter Secretary